"CASE OF THE CRIMSON COFFIN"
APR.
NO. 298
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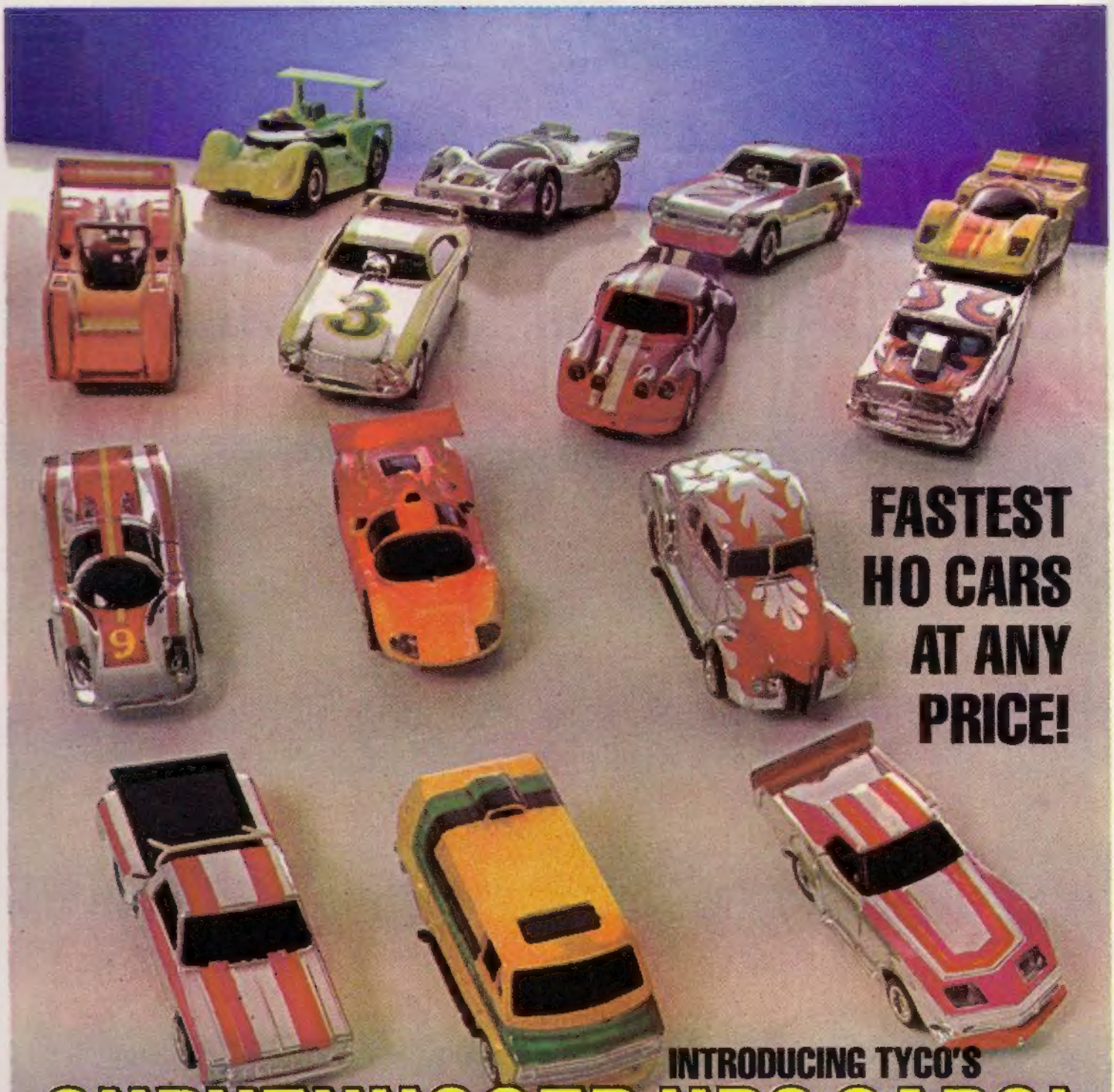
35¢
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BAT MAN



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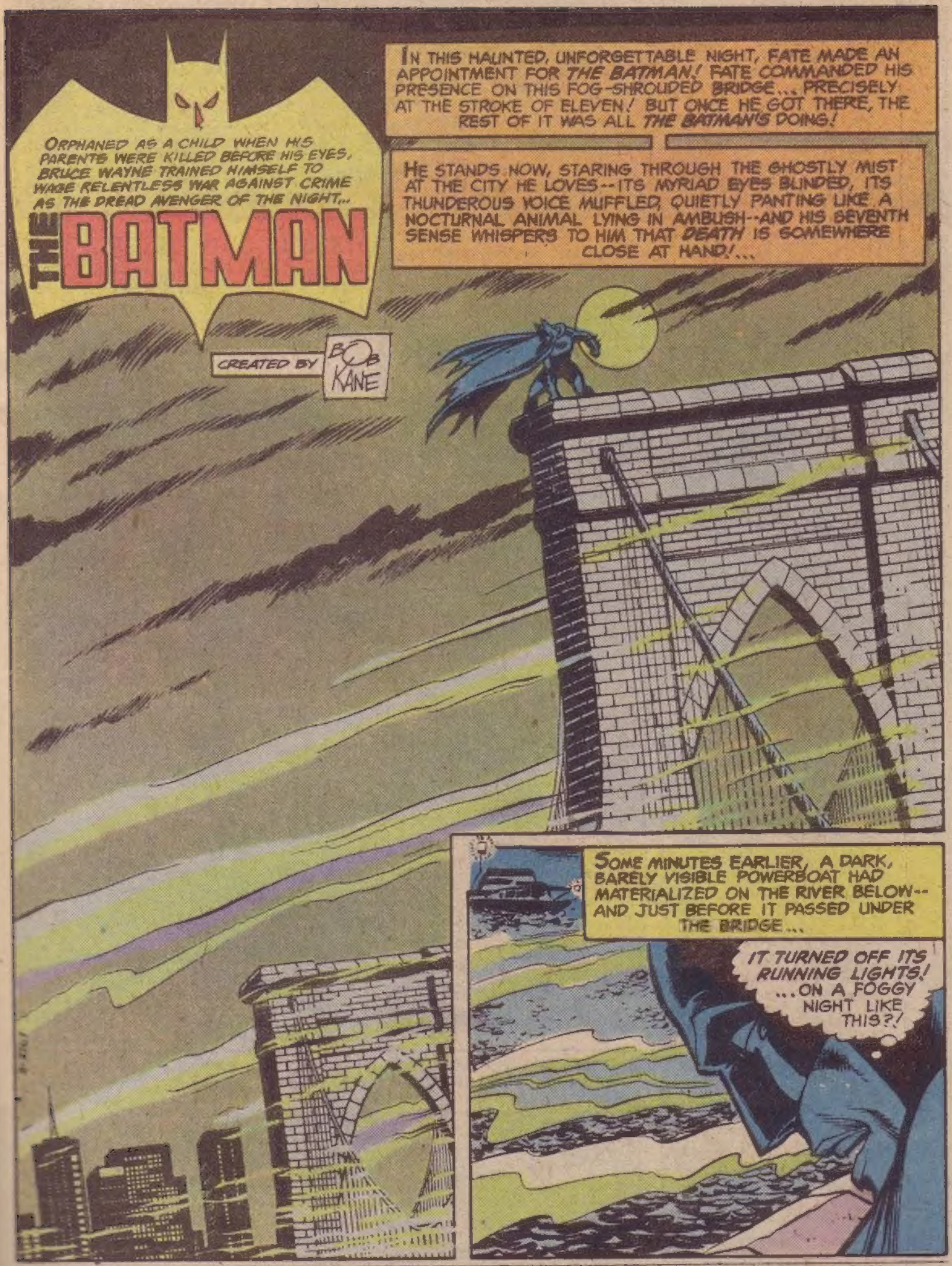
ORPHANED AS A CHILD WHEN HIS PARENTS WERE KILLED BEFORE HIS EYES, BRUCE WAYNE TRAINED HIMSELF TO WAGE RELENTLESS WAR AGAINST CRIME AS THE DREAD AVENGER OF THE NIGHT...
THE BATMAN
CREATED BY BOB KANE
IN THIS HAUNTED, UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT, FATE MADE AN APPOINTMENT FOR THE BATMAN! FATE COMMANDED HIS PRESENCE ON THIS FOG-SHROUDED BRIDGE... PRECISELY AT THE STROKE OF ELEVEN! BUT ONCE HE GOT THERE, THE REST OF IT WAS ALL THE BATMAN'S DOING!
HE STANDS NOW, STARING THROUGH THE GHOSTLY MIST AT THE CITY HE LOVES--ITS MYRIAD EYES BLINDED, ITS THUNDEROUS VOICE MUFFLED, QUIETLY PANTING LIKE A NOCTURNAL ANIMAL LYING IN AMBUSH--AND HIS SEVENTH SENSE WHISPERS TO HIM THAT DEATH IS SOMEWHERE CLOSE AT HAND!...
SOME MINUTES EARLIER, A DARK, BARELY VISIBLE POWERBOAT HAD MATERIALIZED ON THE RIVER BELOW--AND JUST BEFORE IT PASSED UNDER THE BRIDGE...
IT TURNED OFF ITS RUNNING LIGHTS! ...ON A FOGGY NIGHT LIKE THIS?!

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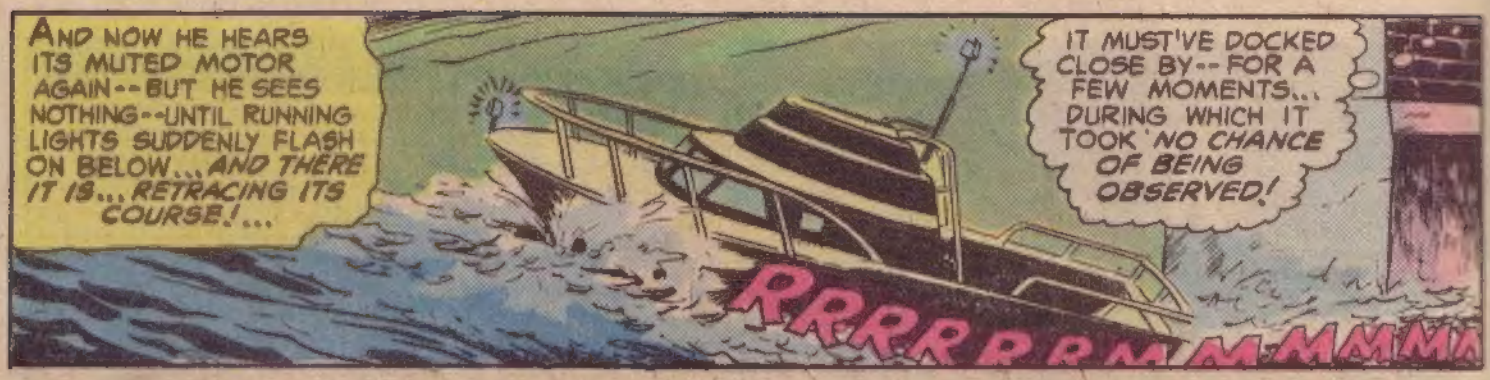
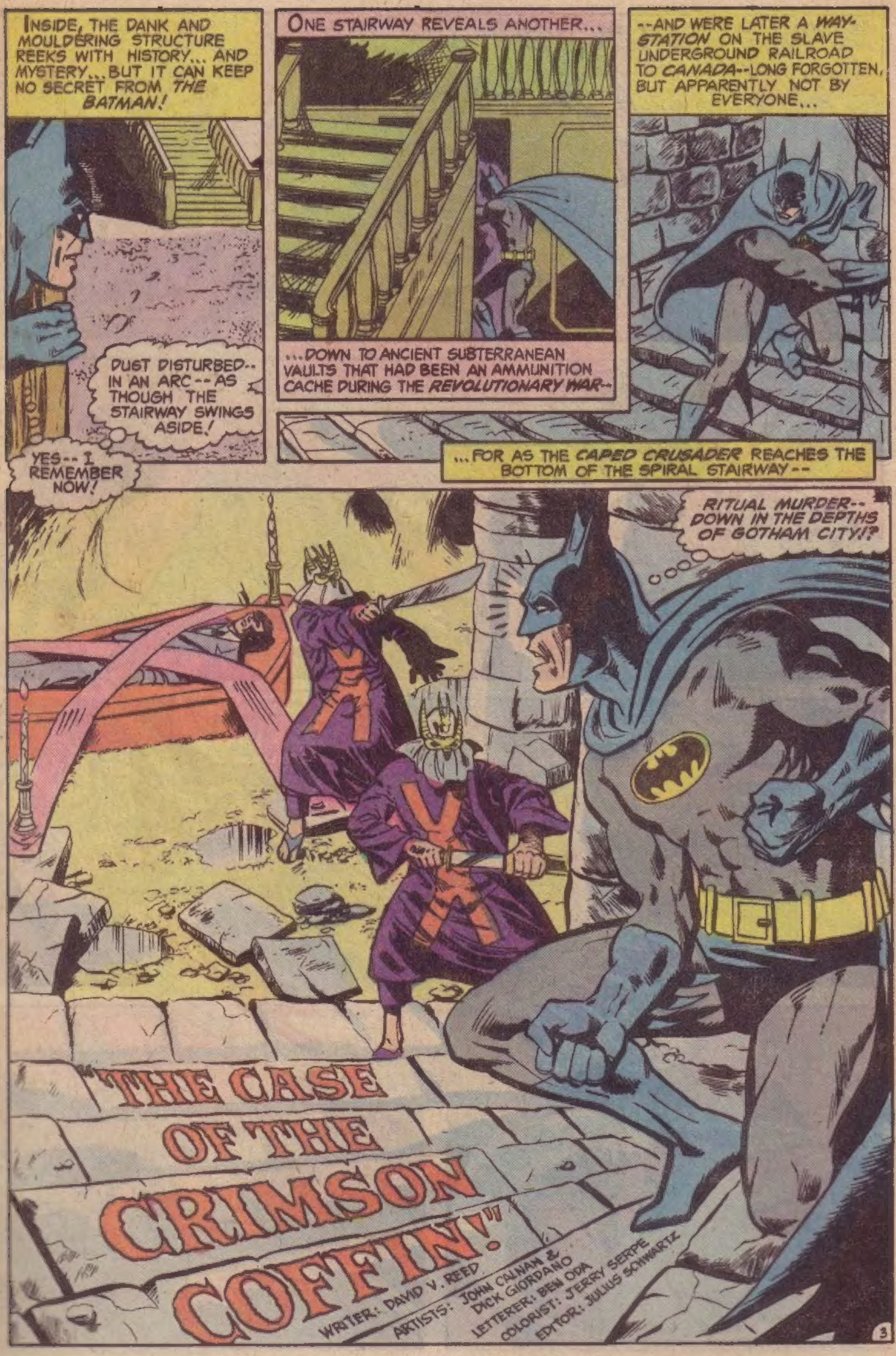

AND NOW HE HEARS ITS MUTED MOTOR AGAIN--BUT HE SEES NOTHING--UNTIL RUNNING LIGHTS SUDDENLY FLASH ON BELOW...AND THERE IT IS...RETRACING ITS COURSE!...
IT MUST'VE DOCKED CLOSE BY--FOR A FEW MOMENTS... DURING WHICH IT TOOK NO CHANCE OF BEING OBSERVED!
RRRR


INSIDE, THE DANK AND MOULDERING STRUCTURE REEKS WITH HISTORY... AND MYSTERY... BUT IT CAN KEEP NO SECRET FROM THE BATMAN!
DUST DISTURBED-- IN AN ARC -- AS THOUGH THE STAIRWAY SWINGS ASIDE!
YES -- I REMEMBER NOW!
ONE STAIRWAY REVEALS ANOTHER...
...DOWN TO ANCIENT SUBTERRANEAN VAULTS THAT HAD BEEN AN AMMUNITION CACHE DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR--
--AND WERE LATER A WAY-STATION ON THE SLAVE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANADA--LONG FORGOTTEN, BUT APPARENTLY NOT BY EVERYONE...
...FOR AS THE CAPED CRUSADER REACHES THE BOTTOM OF THE SPIRAL STAIRWAY --
RITUAL MURDER-- DOWN IN THE DEPTHS OF GOTHAM CITY!?
"THE CASE OF THE CRIMSON COFFIN!"
WRITER: DAVID V. REED
ARTISTS: JOHN CALNAN & DICK GIORDANO
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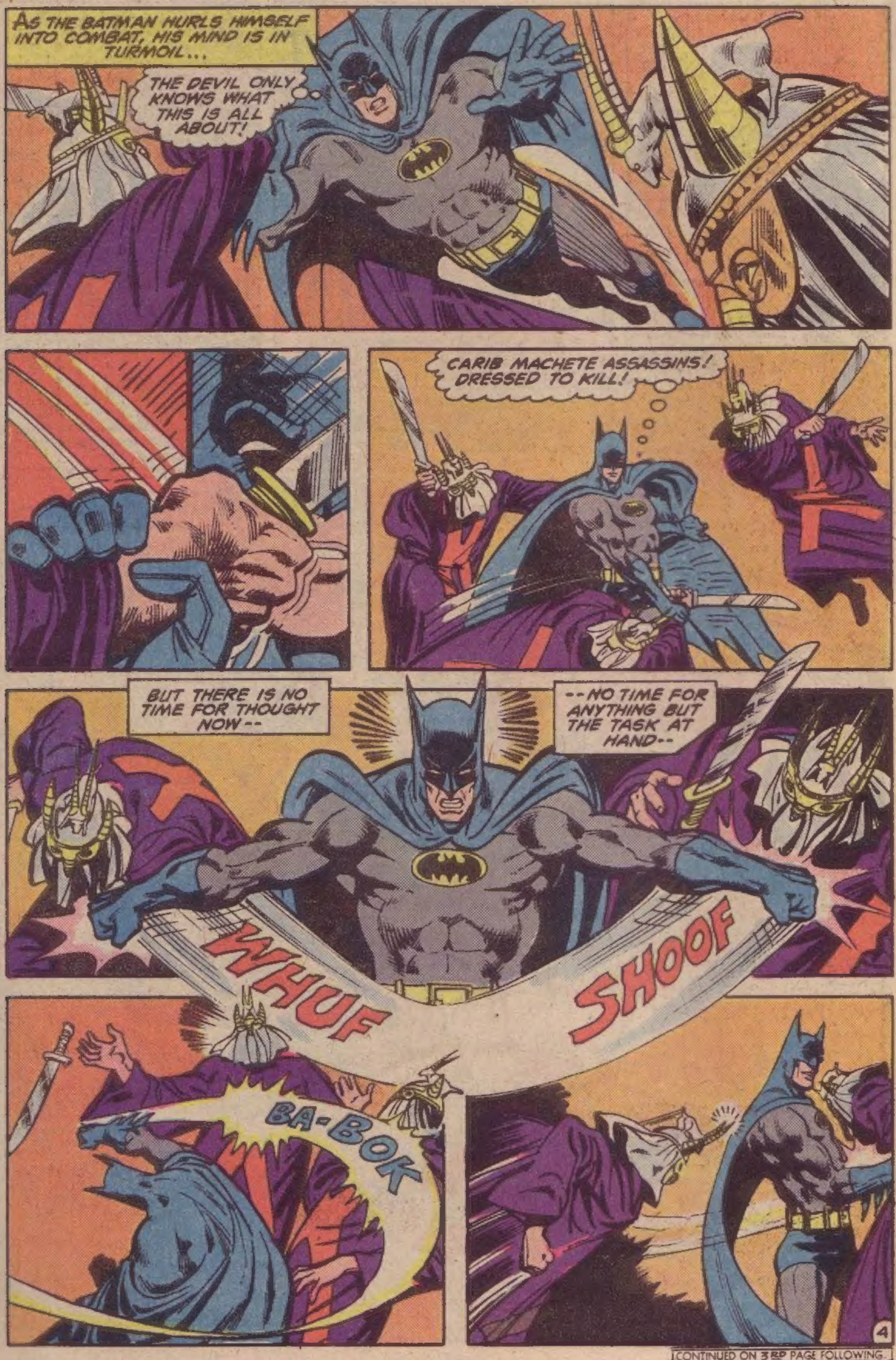
3


AS THE BATMAN HURLS HIMSELF INTO COMBAT, HIS MIND IS IN TURMOIL...
THE DEVIL ONLY KNOWS WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!
CARIB MACHETE ASSASSINS! DRESSED TO KILL!
BUT THERE IS NO TIME FOR THOUGHT NOW--
--NO TIME FOR ANYTHING BUT THE TASK AT HAND--
WHUF
SHOOF
BA-BOK
4

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

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WHOMF
--AND HAND AGAIN--
--AND-- OUT!
--FOOT--
THOONK
BRONNG
THE "CORPSE" IS STILL ALIVE-- BUT UNCONSCIOUS... PROBABLY DRUGGED!
SWIFTLY, THE BATMAN CUFFS THE MACHETE MEN ...HAND AND FOOT--
NO SANDALIAS ON THEM...
...WHICH MEANS THAT WHOEVER WORE THEM MUST BE FARTHER IN HERE SOMEWHERE!
5

DEEPER INTO THE FOUL AND FETID CAVERNS PLUNGES THE MASKED MANHUNTER--
--SEARCHING--
SEARCHING...
THEN--AS HE PENETRATES STILL ANOTHER RECESS...
WHAT--!? THREE CARIB NATIVES--ILLEGAL ALIENS--RIGHT OFF THE BOAT!... TOO TERRIFIED TO MOVE...OR UTTER A SOUND!
NOR DO THE COWERING MEN OFFER THE SLIGHTEST RESISTANCE TO THE BATMAN'S BRUSQUE SCRUTINY...
SIX DIFFERENT SANDALIAS WITH SIX DIFFERENT TREADS--
--AND HERE'S THE ONE THAT LEFT THAT SINGLE CARELESS FOOTPRINT OUTSIDE!
THERE'S MORE THAN FEAR KEEPING THEM SO DOCILE--SOMETHING THAT PRODUCED THIS MYOSIS*!
SUDDENLY--A HEARTRENDING SCREAM PIERCES THE STILLNESS!
A WOMAN'S VOICE!--FROM THE NEXT COMPARTMENT!
HELP HELP
*ABNORMAL CONTRACTION OF THE PUPILS! --JULIE
THE BATMAN!--THANK GOD!
6

WHO ARE YOU? HOW'D YOU GET HERE?
I'M A REPORTER FOR--
BEHIND YOU!--LOOK OUT!
FINISH HIM OFF!
BUT THE WARNING COMES TOO LATE-- AND AS THE BATMAN WHIRLS, HE SPINS SQUARELY INTO THE CRUSHING BLOW! ...
THUK
STUNNED--HIS SENSES REELING-- KNOWING HE IS AT THE BRINK OF BLACKING OUT--THE BATMAN'S SUPERB SURVIVAL FACULTIES TAKE OVER AND--
--E REACTS WITH UNDIMINISHED INSTINCT!
THAT DOES IT!--FOR HIM AND THE OTHER RATS DOWN THERE WITH HIM!
LONG, LONG MINUTES PASS...SLOWLY, BITTERLY, CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNS TO THE BATMAN...
JUST ABOUT ESCAPED WITH MY LIFE ...SO WHY DO I FEEL SO ROTTEN?

LATER, AT POLICE H.Q. ... AS THE DARKNIGHT DETECTIVE CONCLUDES BRIEFING COMMISSIONER GORDON...
...AND THEY WERE ALL GONE... INCLUDING THE GIRL, THE VICTIM, AND HIS CRIMSON COFFIN!
OUTSIDE, I FOUND NEW TIRE-TRACKS FROM A TRUCK THAT MUST'VE BEEN HIDDEN NEARBY AMONG THE RUINS... AND THAT'S IT... WHATEVER IT IS!
SMUGGLING IN ALIENS IS ONE THING--BUT WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF IT?
YOU'RE ASKING ME?
JUST RHETORICALLY, COMMISSIONER! I KNOW THE CEREMONY THEY WERE PREPARING... A RITUAL SACRIFICIAL-KILLING--
--A MIXTURE OF HAITIAN VOODOO, AFRICAN OBEAH AND CARIBAN INDIAN WITCHCRAFT!
THERE'S NO ONE ON YOUR DEPARTMENTAL LIST OF MISSING PERSONS WHOSE DESCRIPTION MATCHES THE MAN ON THE COFFIN.
HE'D HAVE HAD TO BE REPORTED MISSING FOR AT LEAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS TO BE ON THE LIST!
RIGHT--BUT HE HAD A THREE-DAY BEARD --SO HE MAY WELL HAVE BEEN MISSING FOR THOSE THREE DAYS!
AS FOR THE GIRL REPORTER--I CHECKED ALL THE CITY PAPERS... NO SUCH PERSON MISSING!
BUT THAT MEANS NOTHING... SHE COULD BE FROM ANYWHERE!
HERE'S WHAT THE MAN ON THE COFFIN LOOKED LIKE--FOR THE DEPARTMENT FILES, COMMISSIONER!
BATMAN, THERE'S NO END TO YOUR TALENTS!
--BUT IN THIS CASE, MY TALENTS SEEM TO HAVE LED ME TO A DEAD END!
HOLD IT, BATMAN! BEFORE YOU GO, I'VE GOT SOMETHING INTERESTING TO SHOW YOU-- SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN TOO BUSY TO KNOW ABOUT!
8
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GREAT KRYPTON! THANKS TO MY X-RAY VISION I CAN SEE THAT ELEVATOR CABLE GETTING READY TO SNAP.
THIS IS A JOB FOR SUPERMAN, NOT CLARK KENT.
"BEFORE YOU CAN SAY UP, UP AND AWAY, SUPERMAN IS STREAKING UP THE ELEVATOR SHAFT TO THE 73RD FLOOR.
I'M SCARED.
LET ME OUT OF HERE.
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SOMETIME LATER...
AND WERE YOU SCARED DURING THIS DARING RESCUE BY SUPERMAN???
WE KNEW SUPERMAN WOULD SAVE US!
BESIDES, WE WERE TOO BUSY ENJOYING THESE HOSTESS CUP CAKES.
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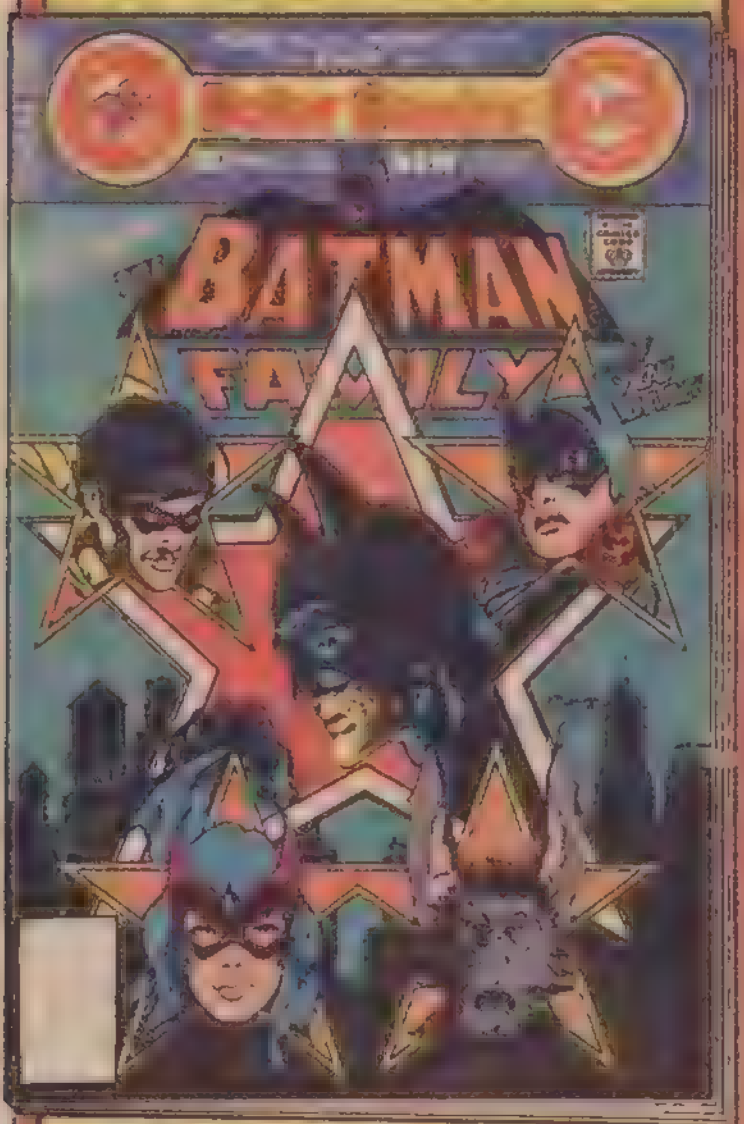

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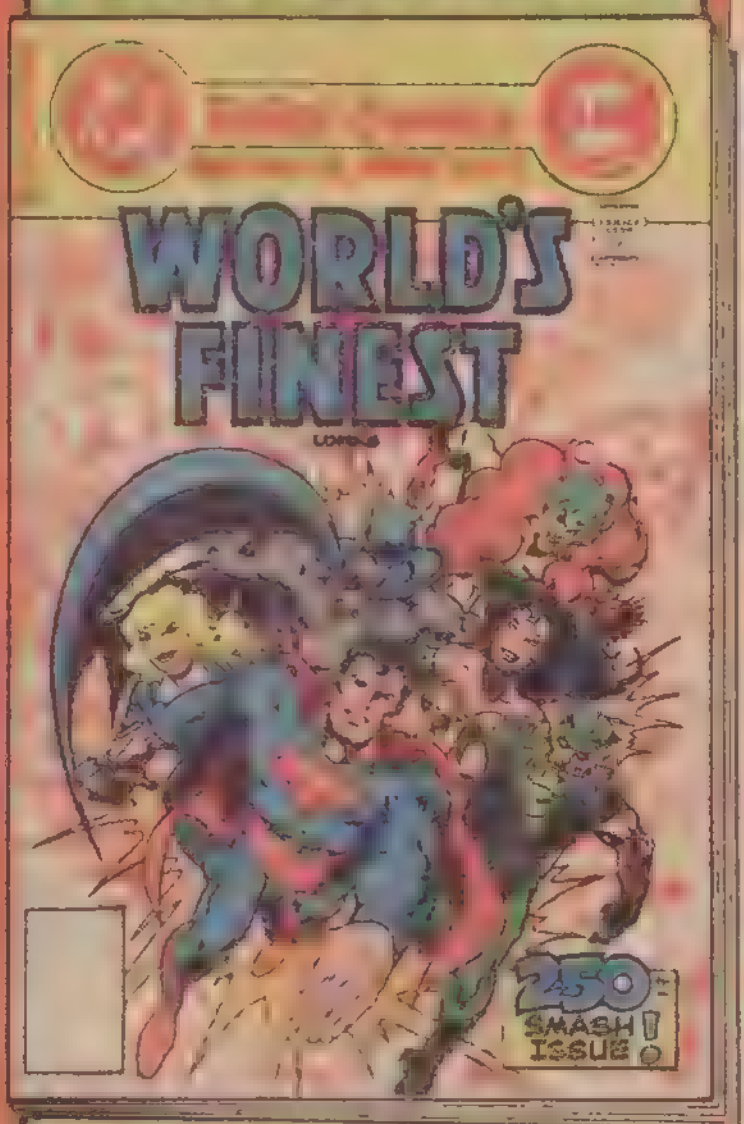

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THERE WAS A STARTLING NEW SIGN AMONG THE BIG SPECTACULARS IN GOTHAM SQUARE TONIGHT!
HERE'S A SHOT WE TOOK OF IT BEFORE WE TURNED IT OFF AND DISMANTLED IT.
STARTING TONIGHT, THE BATMAN'S IDENTITY WILL BE REVEALED TO THE CITIZENS OF GOTHAM IN A SERIES OF CLUES!
CLUE NO. 1: HE IS A WELL-KNOWN MILLIONAIRE!
NO ONE KNOWS WHO ERECTED IT--OR HOW OR WHEN--BUT OBVIOUSLY, THE NUT BEHIND THIS STUNT IS AN EXTREMELY CAPABLE NUT!
IT'S THE OLD WHO-IS-THE-BATMAN GUESSING GAME--IN LIGHTS!
EVERYBODY WANTS TO GET INTO THE ACT--EXCEPT YOU, EH, COMMISSIONER?
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE CLUE?
NOT MUCH! ANYBODY WHO CAN DO THE THINGS YOU DO --WITH YOUR RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT--MUST BE A MILLIONAIRE ...AND MILLIONAIRES ARE USUALLY WELL-KNOWN!
BUT WHAT CAN BE BEHIND IT? DO YOU THINK IT'LL CONTINUE--?
WHO KNOWS? WHO CARES? THIS NONSENSE IS ALL I NEEDED TO MAKE MY NIGHT COMPLETE!
9

IT IS FIVE A.M. WHEN THE BATMAN RETURNS TO HIS PENTHOUSE HOME. HE SPENDS THE NEXT HOUR IN THE BATCAVE REFERENCE LIBRARY... AND AFTER HIS CUSTOMARY THREE-HOUR MORNING SLEEP... AWAKENS TO ASSUME THE PUBLIC IDENTITY OF HIS ALTER EGO--
--BRUCE WAYNE, SPORTSMAN, PLAYBOY, AND MILLIONAIRE INDUSTRIAL TYCOON-- AS THE NORMAL SCHEDULE OF HIS DAY BEGINS AT NINE...
YOU SEEM RATHER TROUBLED THIS MORNING, MASTER BRUCE.
I AM, ALFRED. I MUST'VE SPOKEN TO A DOZEN FINGER-MEN LAST NIGHT WITHOUT GETTING THE SLIGHTEST HINT OF A LEAD TO THIS NEW CASE I'M ON.
A NEW CASE, SIR?
I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT LATER. RIGHT NOW I'M TRYING TO SORT OUT MY THOUGHTS.
BUT YOU'VE SCARCELY TOUCHED YOUR BREAKFAST!
SORRY, ALFRED... NO APPETITE!
TEN A.M.-- THE START OF THREE CONCENTRATED HOURS DEVOTED TO THE VAST BUSINESS INTERESTS OF WAYNE ENTERPRISES--
WAS I JUST HAVING AN UNUSUALLY BAD RUN OF LUCK WITH THE RANDOM SOURCES I HAPPENED TO FIND LAST NIGHT?
BUT TODAY HIS MIND IS ELSEWHERE...
...EVEN THROUGH LUNCH AT THE 21 CLUB... WITH ONE OF HIS FAVORITE PEOPLE--
-- EITHER THAT, OR IT'S THE MOST HUSH-HUSH OPERATION I'VE BEEN UP AGAINST IN A LONG TIME!
BRUCE, DEAR, YOU'VE HARDLY SAID A WORD SINCE WE GOT HERE!
OH...?
THREE P.M.-- AT HIS TENNIS CLUB... WHERE HE EXPLODES HIS MOUNTING TENSIONS IN A DAZZLING DISPLAY OF SKILL--
WHACK!
WHEW! ANOTHER ACE!
BRUCE, YOU'RE A SHOO-IN FOR THE SINGLES CUP AGAIN!
...BUT MY MESSAGES ARE OUT... AND TONIGHT I'LL BE HEARING FROM SOME OF THE BEST BIRDS IN THE BUSINESS!
10

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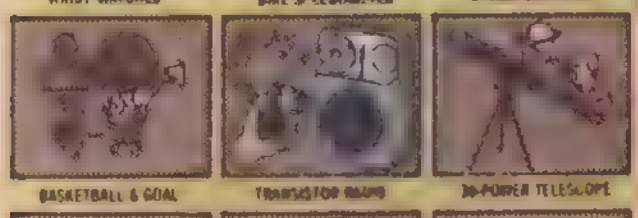

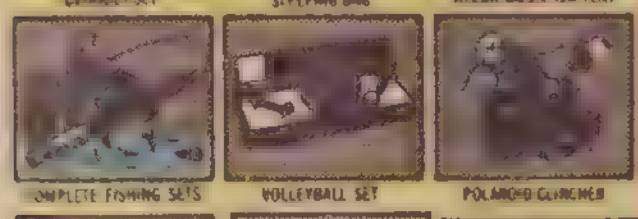

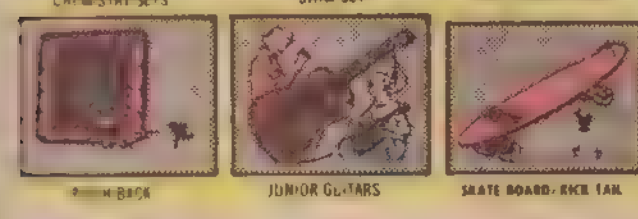

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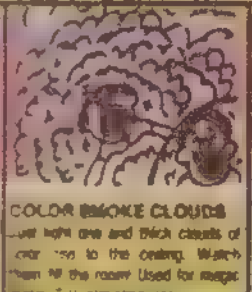

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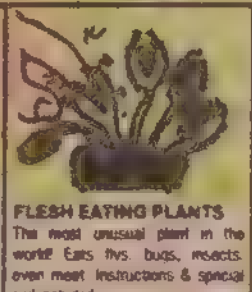

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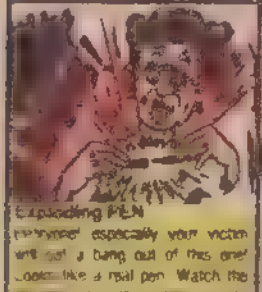

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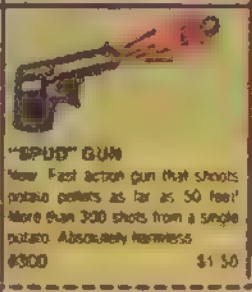

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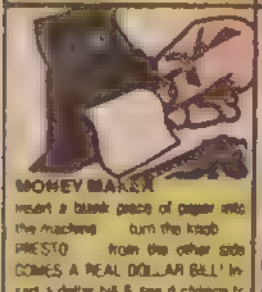

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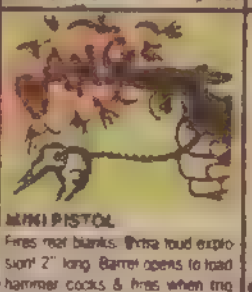

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AT FOUR-THIRTY, A BRIEF AFTERNOON NAP... THEN, DINNER AT SEVEN, BY EIGHT, THE CAPED CRUSADER IS MAKING HIS ROUNDS...

BUT THE HOURS ARE WASTED... NOT A WORD COMES HIS WAY... NOT UNTIL--

--TEN-THIRTY... THE MEETING WITH SCHEMER LEO-- A SOURCE WHO HAS SELDOM FAILED HIM...

BLOWUPS, NO SOLID OFFICE... DOUBLE-NIX BUSHWA ON THIS WIRE... ONE SAYS BANANA-SNEAKERS, ANOTHER SAYS CRIMPERS... BUT KINKY DYNO COPPERHEARTS!*

*TRANSLATION: RUMORS, NO VERIFIED INFORMATION... THIS MOB IS CLOSED TO OUTSIDERS... SOME SAY THEY'RE SMUGGLERS SPECIALIZING IN CARIBBEAN NATIVES, OTHERS SAY THEY'RE SHANGHAIERS... BUT VERY STRANGE AND VERY DANGEROUS!

ONE NOSE SAYS THEY'RE WORKING A RED ROD ACADEMY-- FOR DROPPERS! --RIGHT HERE IN G-TOWN! YOU NEED OTHER BUZZMEN! *

*TRANSLATION: ONE SOURCE SAYS THEY'RE CONDUCTING A SCHOOL FOR TRAINING ASSASSINS IN GOTHAM! YOU NEED OTHER INFORMANTS!

MINUTES LATER-- AS THE BATMAN SWINGS TO ANOTHER RENDEZ-VOUS

BATMAN CLUE #2: HE IS A TOP AMATEUR ATHLETE!

HE DID IT AGAIN! ANOTHER GUESS... AND NOT A BAD ONE! BUT ANYONE MIGHT DEDUCE THAT FROM WHAT'S PUBLICLY KNOWN ABOUT THE BATMAN!

PLENTY OF LIGHT-- BUT NO REAL ILLUMINATION!

NOT ONLY DOES THE REST OF THAT NIGHT PROVE FRUITLESS, BUT THE SUCCEEDING NIGHT AS WELL --WITH AN OMINOUS NEW TWIST!...

WHERE'S THE MONK...?

...WHERE'S BLINKY?

...OR NEEDLES?

HOLED UP OR LAMMED OUT, BATMAN!

LESS THAN HALF THE PEOPLE HE HAS SUMMONED SHOW UP-- AND THOSE WHO DO, REPORT NOTHING AND ANXIOUSLY GET OFF THE SCENE-- FAST!

...SH WHEN HE GOES TO THE BOARDS"-- THE BATMAN'S ULTRA-SECRET MEANS OF COMMUNICATING-- A COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARDS-- WITH ULTRA-SECRET SOURCES WHO NEVER MEET WITH HIM--

SEVEN BOARDS --SEVEN ZIPS!

THEN-- THIS WEIRD ENCOUNTER--

FACE IT, BATMAN-- YOU'RE GETTIN' EVERYBODY JITTERY! THEY FIGURE IF YOUR COVER BLOWS, THEIRS BLOWS WITH IT!

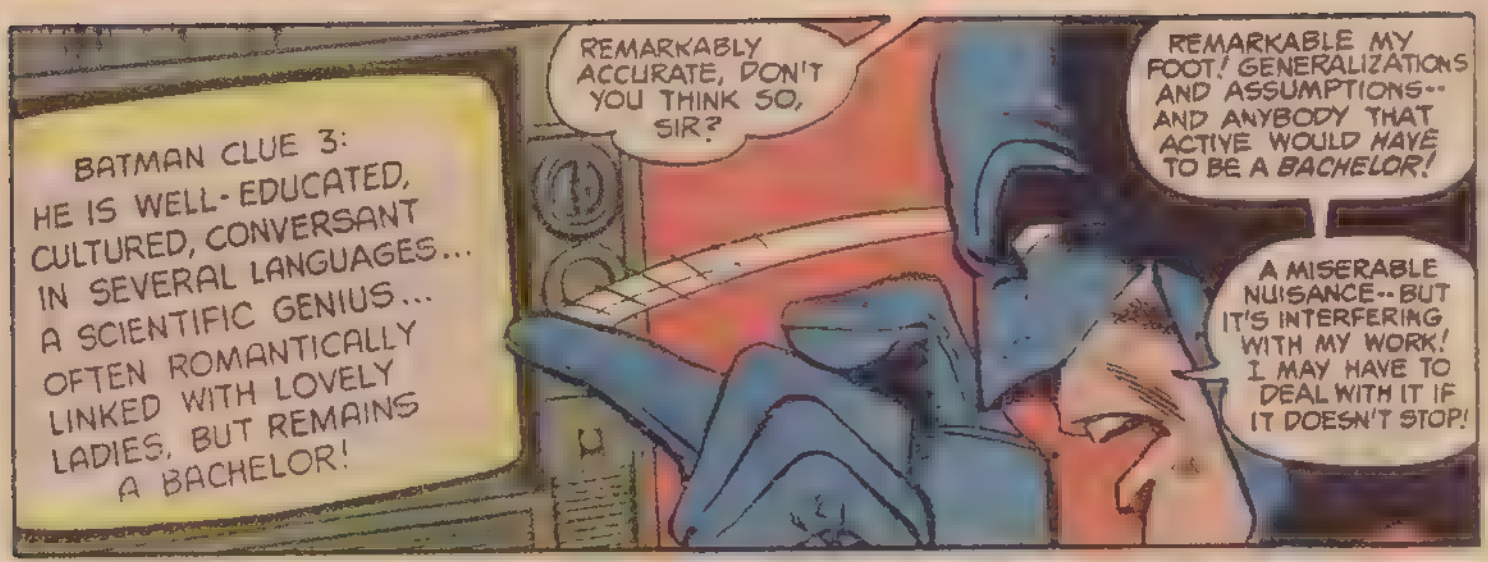
DIDJA CATCH THAT THING ABOUT YOU ON TV TONIGHT?

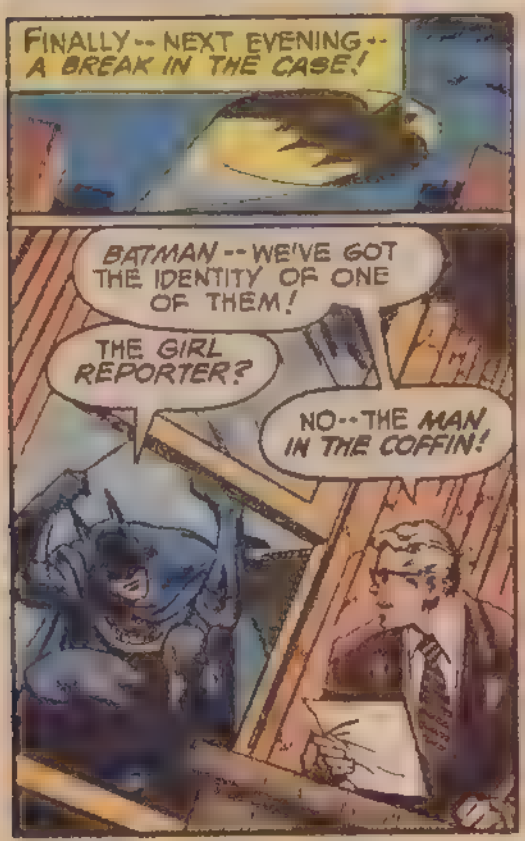
HUH?

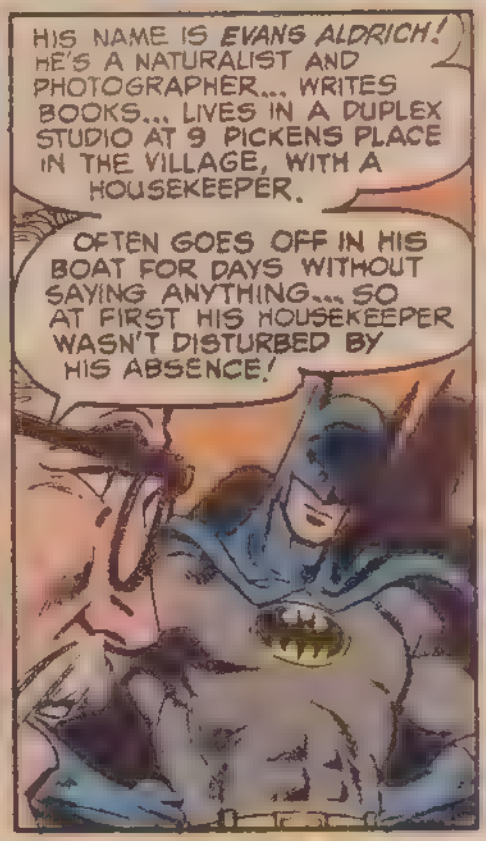
RUSHING HOME, HE FINDS THE ANSWER WAITING--

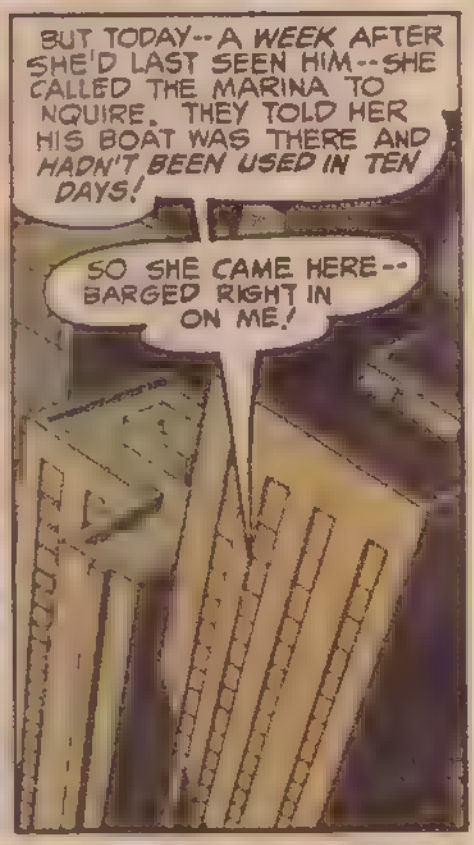
ASTOUNDING, SIR! SIMULTANEOUS INTERRUPTION ON EVERY CHANNEL!

I TAPED IT, OF COURSE!

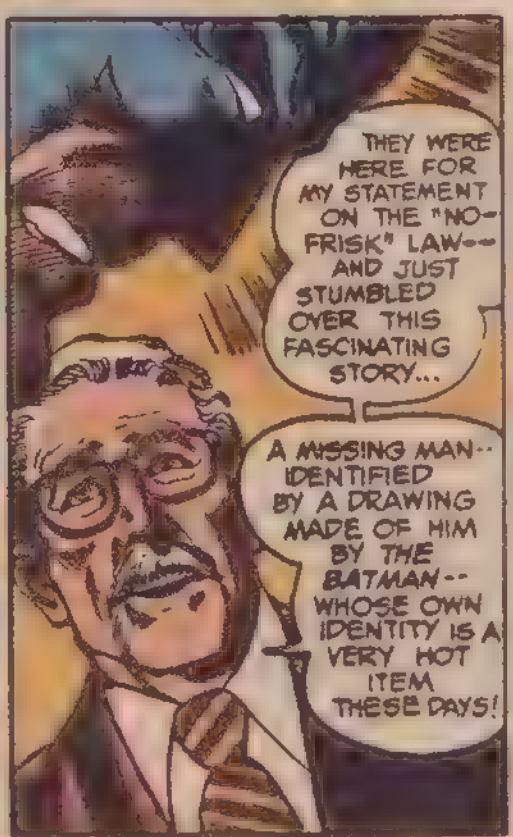

BATMAN CLUE 3: HE IS WELL-EDUCATED, CULTURED, CONVERSANT IN SEVERAL LANGUAGES... A SCIENTIFIC GENIUS... OFTEN ROMANTICALLY LINKED WITH LOVELY LADIES, BUT REMAINS A BACHELOR!
REMARKABLY ACCURATE, DON'T YOU THINK SO, SIR?
REMARKABLE MY FOOT! GENERALIZATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS-- AND ANYBODY THAT ACTIVE WOULD HAVE TO BE A BACHELOR!
A MISERABLE NUISANCE-- BUT IT'S INTERFERING WITH MY WORK! I MAY HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT IF IT DOESN'T STOP!

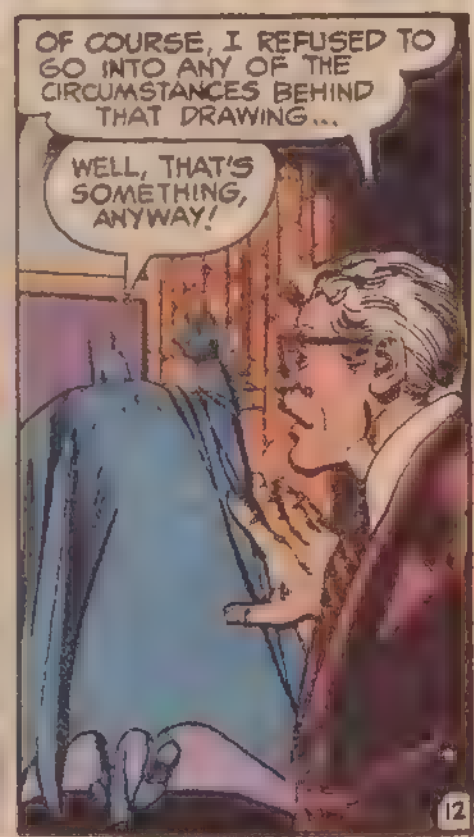

FINALLY-- NEXT EVENING-- A BREAK IN THE CASE!
BATMAN-- WE'VE GOT THE IDENTITY OF ONE OF THEM!
THE GIRL REPORTER?
NO-- THE MAN IN THE COFFIN!


HIS NAME IS EVANS ALDRICH! HE'S A NATURALIST AND PHOTOGRAPHER... WRITES BOOKS... LIVES IN A DUPLEX STUDIO AT 9 PICKENS PLACE IN THE VILLAGE, WITH A HOUSEKEEPER.
OFTEN GOES OFF IN HIS BOAT FOR DAYS WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING... SO AT FIRST HIS HOUSEKEEPER WASN'T DISTURBED BY HIS ABSENCE!


BUT TODAY-- A WEEK AFTER SHE'D LAST SEEN HIM-- SHE CALLED THE MARINA TO NQUIRE. THEY TOLD HER HIS BOAT WAS THERE AND HADN'T BEEN USED IN TEN DAYS!
SO SHE CAME HERE-- BARGED RIGHT IN ON ME!

SHE DIDN'T BRING ANY PICTURES OF ALDRICH, BUT WHEN SHE BEGAN TO DESCRIBE HIM, I SHOWED HER YOUR DRAWING-- AND SHE GASPED!
AND SO DID THE REPORTERS WHO WERE HERE! THEY'RE PRINTING A SHOT OF IT IN THEIR STORIES!
WHAT REPORTERS?-- WHAT STORIES?


THEY WERE HERE FOR MY STATEMENT ON THE "NO-FRISK" LAW-- AND JUST STUMBLED OVER THIS FASCINATING STORY...
A MISSING MAN-- IDENTIFIED BY A DRAWING MADE OF HIM BY THE BATMAN-- WHOSE OWN IDENTITY IS A VERY HOT ITEM THESE DAYS!



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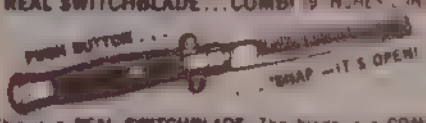

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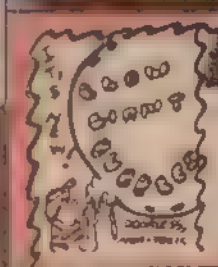

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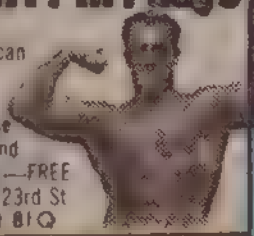

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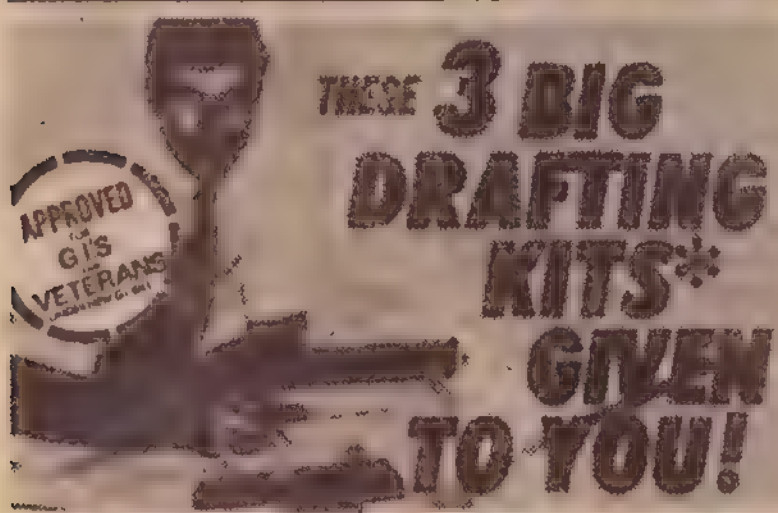

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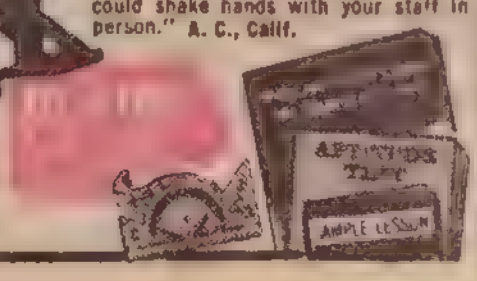

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TOO BAD IT DIDN'T OCCUR TO GORDON THAT I'D WANT TO GET TO ALDRICH'S STUDIO BEFORE THE STORY HIT THE STREETS!
THE ROOFTOP OF 9 PICKENS PLACE...
NO LIGHTS ANYWHERE! THE HOUSEKEEPER WAS TOO UPSET TO STAY HERE ALONE, AND TOOK HERSELF ELSEWHERE!
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* A BURGLAR WHO ROBS WHILE THE TENANTS ARE AWAY! -- JS.
SURE ENOUGH -- THERE'S ONE NOW!... LOOKING AT WHAT--?
LET'S FIND OUT--!
IT'S -- THE REPORTER!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHAT ARE THOSE PHOTOS YOU'RE SO BUSY INSPECTING?
SEE FOR YOURSELF!
SWIFTLY, THE BATMAN RIFFLES THROUGH THE PHOTOGRAPHS...
THEY ALL SHOW AN ISLAND... THICKLY OVERGROWN... SURROUNDED BY GREAT BANKS OF MIST -- EXCEPT THIS ONE...
...LESS DISTINCT THAN THE OTHERS... A BLONDE WOMAN IN WHITE... RUNNING ALONG THE SHORE WITH TWO HUGE DOGS!
YOU SKIPPED THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE! TAKE ANOTHER LOOK!
13

WHY--?
CLICK
--SO YOUR BUDDIES CAN JUMP ME AGAIN?
WHAT AN INTRIGUING COSTUME! I'VE SEEN IT BEFORE!
SWOOOSH
TGHKRK
CRASH
BRATATT

WOK
OOOHW
OOOOOM
KKOOOOOK
AND NOW I'LL COLLECT MY HELPFUL REPORTER FRIEND!
But..
THE LADY VANISHES!--AND THE PHOTOS WITH HER!
NO MATTER! I SAW THEM--WHICH IS AS GOOD AS HAVING THEM!
THEN--
PHOTOGRAPHERS INVARIABLY KEEP A LOG OF THEIR SHOTS ...WITH TECHNICAL DATA ... AND NOTES DESCRIBING THE LOCALES--
--THAT YOU, O'HARA?...SEND THE WAGON TO 9 PICKENS PLACE TO PICK UP A FEW PUNKS ...YEAH, I KNOW... BUT IT'S NOT AS FUNNY AS IT SOUNDS!
15

YEP!... THE LAST ENTRIES IN HIS LOG--ALL ABOUT THOSE PHOTOS!

"...THE ISLAND'S UNINHABITED... TOO SMALL TO BE NAMED ON CHARTS... FOREVER CONCEALED IN SHIMMERING MIST.

" I'VE CIRCLED IT MANY TIMES, BUT HAVE DELAYED EXPLORATION... LOCAL FISHERMEN AND SAILORS ALL EMPHATICALLY WARN AGAINST IT..."

"...BECAUSE OF THE WILD, RABID DOGS WHO ROAM THE ISLAND! BUT WHAT OF THE GIRL I SAW RUNNING WITH THEM?"

"...AND THE MAN I RECENTLY GLIMPSED--BUT COULDN'T GET A SHOT OF--OBSERVING ME THROUGH BINOCULARS? ...APPARENTLY THEY'RE AWARE OF ME BY NOW..."

SO AWARE OF HIM, THEY CAME AND GOT HIM!

THEY DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS A *PHOTOGRAPHER*--UNTIL THEY READ IT IN THE PAPERS...AND CAME DASHING HERE TO CHECK OUT WHAT HE MIGHT HAVE ON THEM!

WHAM

MOMENTS LATER--

WHERE ARE THEY, *BATMAN*?... WHAT CONDITION ARE THEY IN?... YOU DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT AN *AMBULANCE*...

LOOK AT 'EM! COPS I'VE KNOWN FOR YEARS --GIVING ME THE *ONCE-OVER*--THE GIMLET EYE--HUNG UP ON THE BIG *BATMAN* IDENTITY MYSTERY!

SHORTLY...

HOW CAN I FIND THAT ISLAND? THERE MUST BE SEVERAL IN THIS COASTAL AREA THAT LOOK LIKE IT!

SUDDENLY--A THOUGHT-BREAKER!

BATMAN CLUE 4: HE LIVES IN A PENTHOUSE IN MIDTOWN GOTHAM!

IT'S THAT TIME OF NIGHT AGAIN!

HIS BEST CLUE YET--BUT STILL A *GUESS!*

CONCLUDED ON 3rd PAGE FOLLOWING

HIGH SCHOOL

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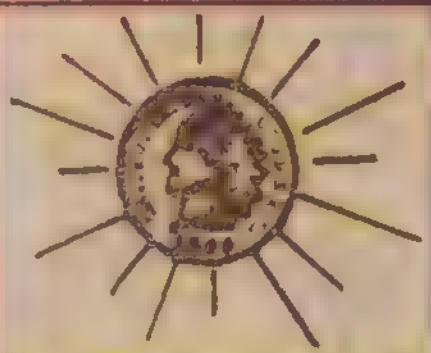

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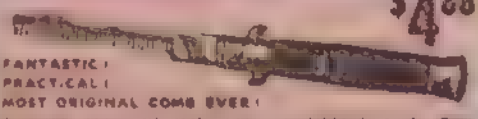

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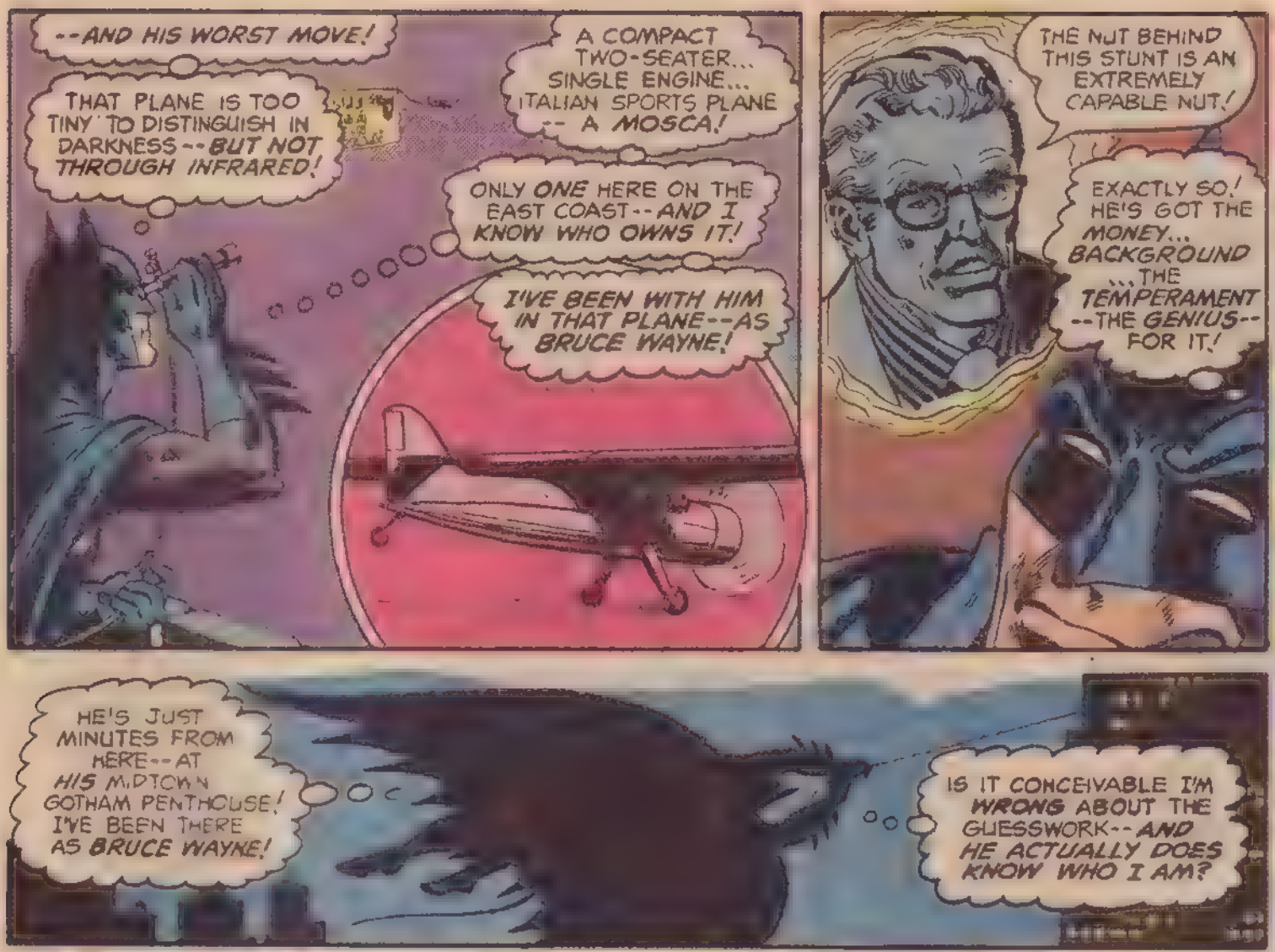
--AND HIS WORST MOVE!
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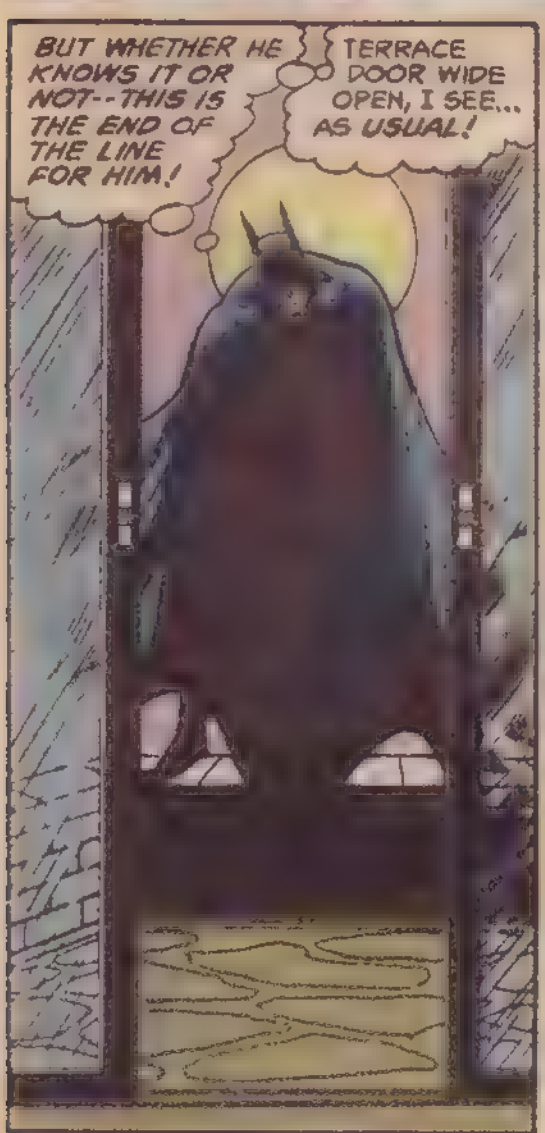
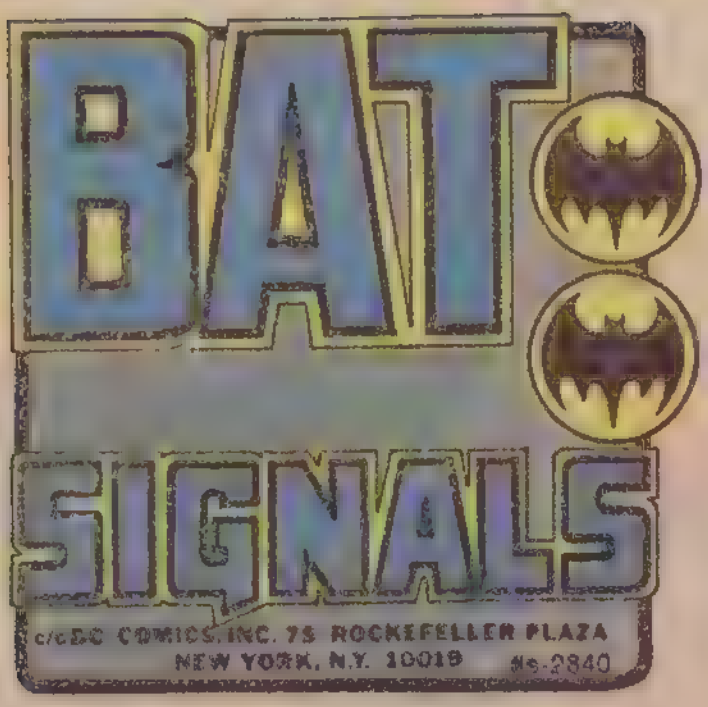
I'VE BEEN WITH HIM IN THAT PLANE--AS BRUCE WAYNE!
THE NUT BEHIND THIS STUNT IS AN EXTREMELY CAPABLE NUT!
EXACTLY SO! HE'S GOT THE MONEY... BACKGROUND ...THE TEMPERAMENT --THE GENIUS-- FOR IT!

HE'S JUST MINUTES FROM HERE--AT HIS MIDTOWN GOTHAM PENTHOUSE! I'VE BEEN THERE AS BRUCE WAYNE!
IS IT CONCEIVABLE I'M WRONG ABOUT THE GUESSWORK--AND HE ACTUALLY DOES KNOW WHO I AM?


BUT WHETHER HE KNOWS IT OR NOT--THIS IS THE END OF THE LINE FOR HIM!
TERRACE DOOR WIDE OPEN, I SEE... AS USUAL!

AND AS THE BATMAN STEPS THROUGH THE DOOR--INTO A REALM OF BLACK LIGHT--
WELCOME, BATMAN! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU--AND YOU HAVEN'T FAILED ME!
AND WE'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU NEXT ISSUE--AND WE WON'T FAIL YOU WITH "ISLAND OF PURPLE MIST"-- ON SALE THE 2ND WEEK IN FEBRUARY!



Dear People,

"The Testimony of The Joker" certainly proved to be a tale well worth the 3-issue build-up. Though I had already tapped **Two-Face** as **The Batman**, I still got a big kick out of the proceedings. In retrospect, these stories will go down as classics; they showed that **The Batman** is as much at home mingling with his arch-foes as he is tracking them down. So extensive and relentless has been his war on crime that **The Batman** has developed the ability to actually think like the villains. Thus, we have been again privy to the secret of **The Batman's** success: he understands and anticipates crimes, rather than just solving them. This element is, of course, what sets him apart from the rest of the superheroes in comics: **The Batman** is a detective first and an athlete second.

Though I greatly preferred Mike Grell's version of the Darknight Detective, John Calnan's version has its certain attractions. For this four-parter, a more "cartoony" style was needed. Calnan did quite well with most of the villains, failing only to display the truly macabre visage of **Two-Face**, who came off looking more human than ogre, which hampered the effectiveness of the art. Still, I suppose that you can pass it off by explaining that it was a disguise, not the real T-F.

The Batman is fast approaching **#300** and though you undoubtedly have already begun work on that issue, I would like to make some suggestions for the future. David V. Reed has proven himself adept at almost every type of **Batman** story, whether it be a battle with the villains, a supernatural tale, a grim underworld story, or whatever. He has superbly handled humor, pathos, fear and anger. To replace Reed would be a major mistake and I trust that you agree. Calnan's art is not exactly suited for **The Batman**, who needs somebody like Adams or Grell, but I suppose I can live with him . . . as long as you give him another inker!

Keep those great stories coming, guys. I love 'em!

BLANCHE DAVIS
1127A Grant Towers South
DeKalb, IL 60115

After a rotating artist sequence, John Calnan returns, now with Dick Giordano inking. Satisfied, Blanche? And for those of you who enjoy different writers on The Batman, we hasten to point out that Gerry Conway has a Bat-tale in BATMAN FAMILY #17 (with Denny O'Neil scheduled for regular work there in #18) and Len Wein returns to DC to handle our Caped Crusader over in DETECTIVE COMICS!—BR

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

Up until **BATMAN #294**, I had been very disappointed with recent issues of the book. I thought the Bat-murder four-parter would be your average **Batman** tale where he turns up at the end and captures all the criminals present at the trial.

Well, when I read **#294**, I was utterly surprised. Not only did we get to see just about all of the villains who have plagued the Darknight Detective over the years, but the biggest shock was that not one of the villains present was arrested at the conclusion. How many stories have been published where **Batman** lets all these guys get off scot free? It was a nice change of pace.

I would have sworn that the death which occurred in the story was a hoax. I expected **Batman** to come up with a fancy reason for his not being killed. David Reed has done an admirable job with the series; I hope he keeps it up in the future. He has even given **The Joker** a combination personality which consists of his homicidal tendencies and his zany personality of the mid-sixties. It's a nice combination!

The story even contained a message. One should never try to imitate or do anything that a comics character does, even in fun. If you want to help people the way **The Batman** does, you should become a trained professional. I am sure many younger readers have imagined themselves to be **The Batman** (I know I have), but they should realize that the character is a purely fictional one. The feats performed by the Caped Crusader should not be copied unless you know what you are doing.

PHILIP M. BOTWINICK
83-05 98th Avenue
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Joker fans will get another version of the Clown Prince of Crime by picking up DETECTIVE #476, the Steve Englehart swan-song issue, now on sale!—BR

* * * * *

Dear Julie and Bob,

I'm really sorry to see the Bat-murder epic end. This is undoubtedly David Reed's best series yet and the last chapter was a real treat. The pacing of this segment was really bizarre—totally fitting since this was **The Joker's** chance at bat (ahem). And John Calnan handled **The Joker** beautifully, presenting him at his most insane. His unique panel layouts did much to forward the motion of the story.

Oddly enough, though, the apex of the series is to be found in the denouement. I'm sure the epilogue made every Batmaniac smile. This type of thing has been done before, but Dave added his own touch and it was totally unexpected. And hey, thanks for that scene in the first panel of page 16. I always did want to see my room pictured in the pages of **BATMAN!**

GERALD DUET
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And before we run out of room again: Only two more months till BATMAN #300 and . . . oops! Too late!—Bob Rozakis.

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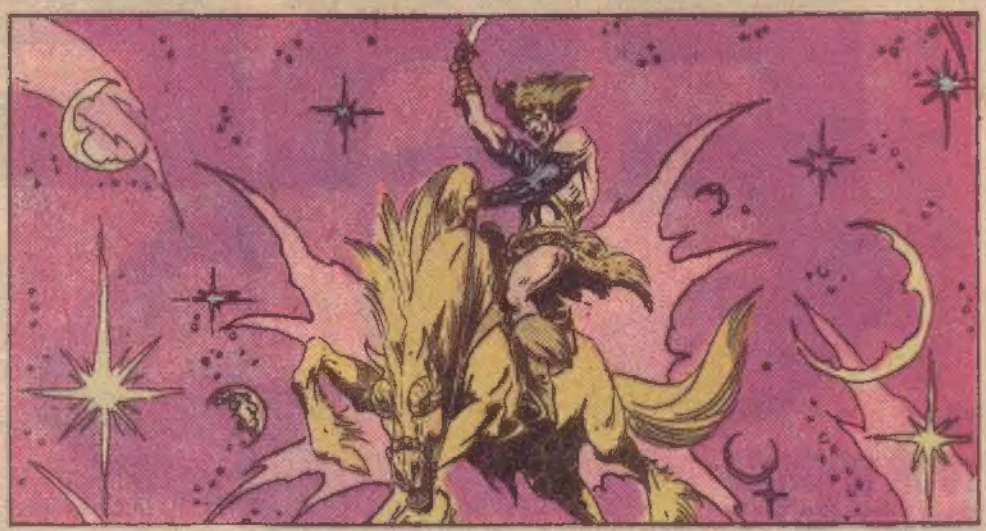
VOLUME 78 ISSUE 1 | WEEK OF JANUARY 2, 1978 | BOB ROZAKIS: EDITOR | ANTHONY TOLLIN: PRODUCTION

CLAW BATTLES SOUL-EATER



BARBARIAN RETURNS IN THRILLING NEW ADVENTURES

(Another Time, Another Place) *Claw the Unconquered*, DC's sword-wielding barbarian hero, is back in action in his own magazine again. Picking up where he left off a year and a half ago, *Claw* travels towards his confrontation with King Occula of the Yellow Eye, the man who wants to be ruler of the multiverse!

But before he can reach the kingdom of Occulas, *Claw* must fight his way out of the grasp of "The Eater of Souls" in an epic tale by David Michelinie, Keith Giffen and John Celardo.

The beginning of a new era will be on the stands the week of January 9th as *CLAW THE UNCONQUERED #10* comes your way! Don't miss it!

HAUNTING TRIO IN HOUSE OF SECRETS

(House of Secrets, Kentucky)— Caretaker Abel has gathered together a trio of terrifying tales to ring in the new year for you. First off, Cary Burkett and Arthur Suyham make an offer of "Love Me . . . Love My Demon!" Then you'll learn that "Death Has Baby Blue Eyes" in a Robert Kanigher/Rubeny collaboration and the issue winds up with a "Nightmare" courtesy of Roger McKenzie and Michael Golden!

It's an all-out fun-and-fear fest in *HOUSE OF SECRETS #151* when the issue goes on sale the week of January 9th! Don't miss it!

ASK THE ANSWER MAN

Q: Was *KOBRA* cancelled? The last issue I saw was *#7*.—Brett Slack.
A: Yes, the magazine was cancelled, but the villain lives on to battle *Aquaman*, *Batman* and *Green Lantern* in *AQUAMAN #61*, on sale soon!

Q: How about an origin story for *Black Canary?*—Charles David Haskell.
A: Coming your way in *SECRET ORIGINS OF SUPER-HEROES* on sale at the end of January.

Q: Is there any comic book featuring adventures of *Doctor Fate?*—Doug Foulk. *A:* The Doctor appears regularly in *ALL-STAR COMICS* and his origin appears in the above-mentioned special

Q: Can you tell me what early issues of *THE FLASH* featured *Professor Zoom?*—Ira L. Pedrosa. *A:* The *Reverse Flash* made his debut in *FLASH #139*, and reappeared in *#'s 147,153,165,175,186, 225* and *237*.

Q: Has the Golden Age *Atom's* origin been revealed?—Kirk Anderson. *A:* Not recently, but there are plans in the works for the character. Watch for an announcement.

Q: If the *Creeper* is on Earth-1 and *Wildcat* is on Earth-2, how did they team up in *SUPER-TEAM FAMILY #2?*—Iain Tilbrook. *A:* There is a *Wildcat* on each Earth, but only the Earth-2 hero is regularly active.

Got a question for the Answer Man? Send it to BOB ROZAKIS, DC Comics, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10019.

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NEW GODS #17—*Orion* and *Jezebelle* go into action against "The Memory Machine," devised by Gerry Conway, Don Newton and Dan Adkins.
SUPER FRIENDS #11—Visiting royalty is the target of the super-foe known as "Kingslayer" by E. Nelson Bridwell, Ramona Fradon and Bob Smith.
SUPERMAN #322—Superman's lost his powers . . . or has he? The *Parasite* is about to launch a "Laser War Over Metropolis" . . . or will he? Marty Pasko, Curt Swan and Francisco Chiaramonte have the answers!
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These unbeatable beauties are molded in authentic colors and have all the custom details you'd find on the full-size originals. Including mag wheels, wide hides, hi-performance mills and the most exciting decals you've ever seen for the perfect super-style look.

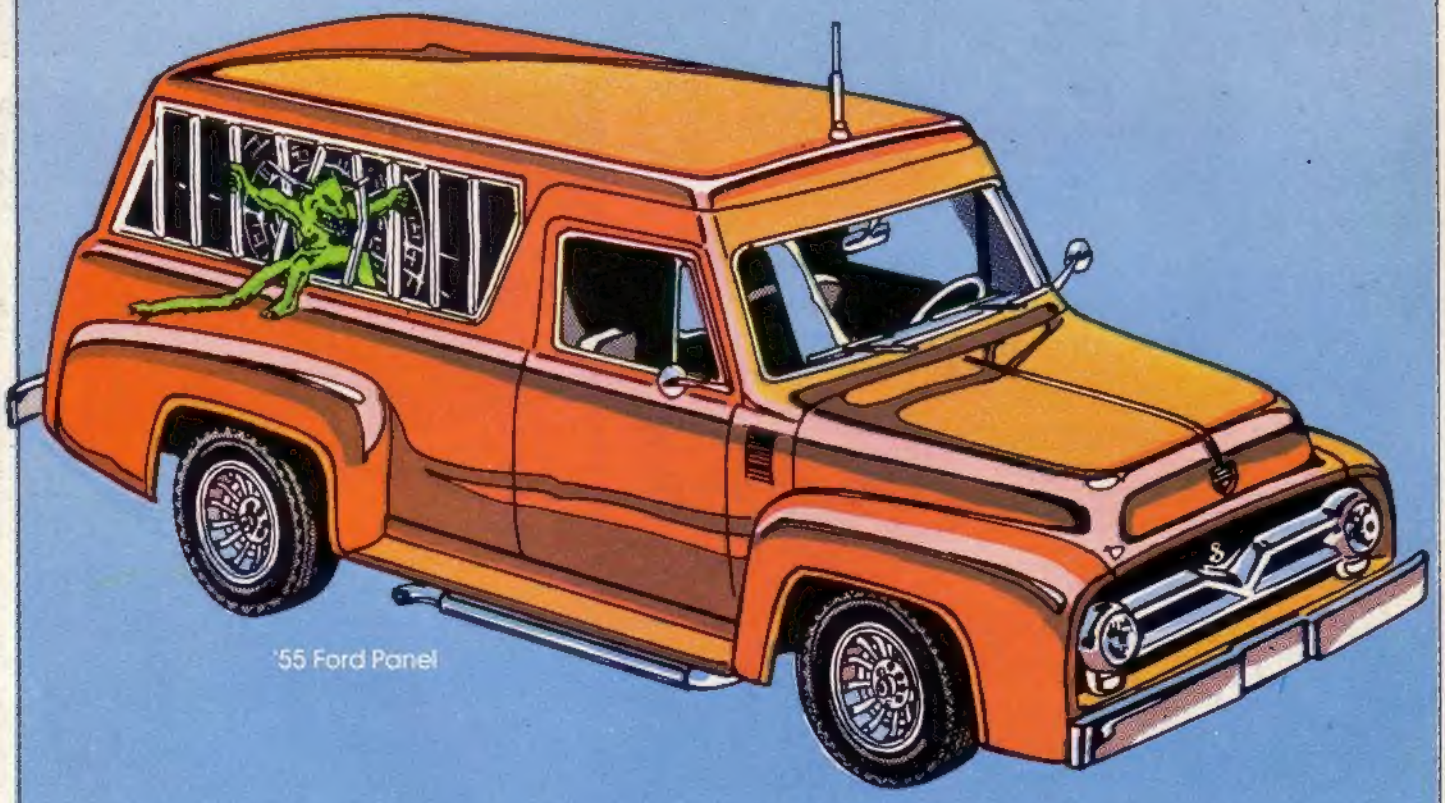
Put any of these exciting Monogram kits together soon, and you'll see why they're champions on any street.

Especially yours.

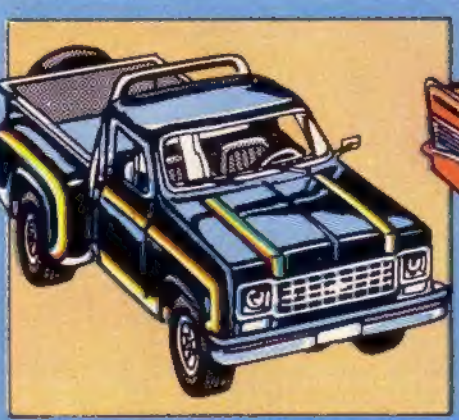
MONOGRAM®

MONOGRAM MODELS, INC.
MORTON GROVE, ILL. 60053

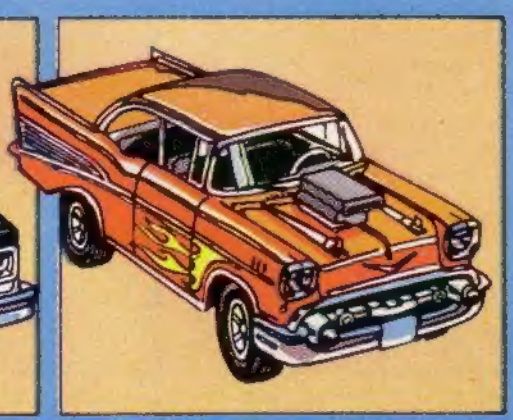
Right. Down to the last detail.



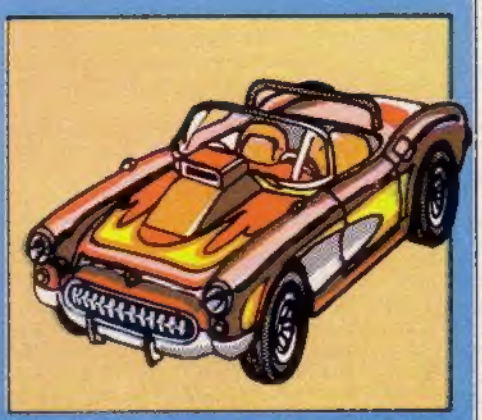
'55 Ford Panel



Chevy Sport Pick-up



'57 Chevy Hardtop



'57 Corvette